



Russia investigation

Mueller indicts 13 for election interference

By David S. Cloud and Joseph Tanfani
TRIBUNE WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — Special counsel Robert Mueller indicted 13 Russians and three Russian companies Friday, accusing them of using stolen identities, fake campaign events and hundreds of social media accounts while spending millions of rubles to interfere in the 2016 presidential election in a secret effort to aid the Trump campaign.

The 37-page indictment, the first charges by Mueller's office accusing Moscow of illegal meddling in the election, says that the Internet Research

Agency, a Russian firm known for using troll accounts to post on news sites, orchestrated the interference campaign and that its operatives tried to communicate with at least three unnamed Trump campaign officials using fake identities.

"By early to mid-2016, Defendants' operation included supporting the presidential campaign of then-candidate Donald J. Trump ... and disparaging Hillary Clinton," says the indictment.

Although the indictment alleges that the Russians contacted unnamed people in the Trump campaign, it does not allege that any Trump campaign officials knowingly cooperated.

"There is no allegation that any American was a willing participant" in the Russian plan, and there is no allegation that it altered the outcome of the election, Deputy Attorney General Rod J. Rosenstein said in a brief news conference discussing the indictment.

Nonetheless, the indictment seriously undermines President Donald Trump's repeated contention that the entire Russia investigation is a "hoax" or "witch hunt." It details specific activities the Russians took, initially focused on creating general discord in the U.S., but eventually focused specifically on boosting Trump's campaign.

At least some of the indicted

people have been identified as having close ties to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Trump had been briefed on the indictment.

A few hours later, Trump responded with a tweet, suggesting that the indictment resolved questions about whether his campaign collaborated with Moscow.

"Russia started their anti-US campaign in 2014, long before I announced that I would run for President. The results of the election were not impacted. The Trump campaign did nothing wrong — no collusion!" he said.



Robert Mueller on Feb. 16, 2011, as he testifies before a Senate Intelligence Committee hearing in Washington, D.C.

The inner workings of Lodi Lake



Metering technician Brandon Warmerdam, left, talks to a co-worker as laborer Rene Magallanes, center, trims loose strands from the retention strap while Reene Magallanes gather them in a bucket as Woodbridge Irrigation District staff clean and repair the air bladders at Woodbridge Dam on Friday.

Workers undertake annual dam maintenance

By Bea Abbeck
NEWS-SENTINEL CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER

Six men, clad in long-sleeve shirts and waterproof rubber boots, worked systematically Friday afternoon down the line of 10 large air bladders, stacked two bladders high, five in a row, at the Woodbridge Dam.

After clearing up the silt that had gathered on the floor of the plunge pool in which the air bladders are located, the work had moved on to cleaning, inspecting and patching the 14-foot long, 4.5-foot tall rubber bladders, which hold the weight of Lodi Lake on their shoulders.

When the lake is full, the air pressure of the bladders is 12-13 pounds per square inch.

"It's one-third of what you have in a car tire," Woodbridge Irrigation District manager Andy Christensen explained.

Now that the lake is empty, the pressure is down to 2 to 3 pounds per square inch, Woodbridge Irrigation District metering technician Brandon Warmerdam estimated.

The pressure of the bladders is controlled by computers, which raises and lowers the bladders by changing the air pressure.

The district can make minute adjustments to the water flow and elevation of the lake.

"The higher you hold the lake, the more pounds per square inch of pressure is needed," Warmerdam explained.

There are two modes of controlling the pressure, Christensen said. The first one is determined by looking at the level of the lake and the second one is determined by the downstream water elevation, or flow, which is measured downstream at the Woodbridge Country Club golf course. East Bay Municipal Utility District runs the station measuring the flow, and sends readings to the dam.



Laborer Reene Magallanes works by the air bladders as Woodbridge Irrigation District staff clean and repair the air bladders at Woodbridge Dam on Friday.



Above: Ditch tender Jesus Gutierrez smooths out rubber adhesive as Woodbridge Irrigation District staff clean and repair the air bladders at Woodbridge Dam on Friday.

When the second mode is used, the water level can be measured five times per minute, and flow changes can be made every few minutes.

The flow downstream can be controlled within the width of a pencil, Christensen said, or $\frac{3}{100}$ of a foot of elevation.

Listening to the constant sound of the river water flowing by at 300 cubic feet per second, workers cleaned in between the bladders, carefully squeezing themselves into the space between them. They removed branches and other obstructions.

"You don't want a board with nails that can puncture the bladders in there," Warmerdam said.

"We've had beavers chew on the bladders before, it's part of nature," Christensen added.

Warmerdam carefully squeezed in between four of the bladders, inspecting damage in the back to the inch-thick inflatable rubber bladders, possibly made by a beaver. At the front of the bladders, a few minor cracks were inspected and cleaned.

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Local school boards re-examine safety plans

By John Bays
NEWS-SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

Following Wednesday's tragic shooting in Florida and recent unsubstantiated rumors in Lodi, Lodi and Galt school officials began examining their own safety plans more closely and increasing their vigilance.

Kevin Brown, interim superintendent of Galt Joint Union High School District, issued a press release on Thursday outlining safety measures such as annual fire and lockdown drills at all schools.

Campus monitors and administrators patrol schools and other dis-

trict buildings daily, and a school resource officer from the Galt Police Department regularly visits the campuses.

The district also installed 128 new security cameras throughout their schools with bond funds, the press release stated.

Tokay High School principal Erik Sandstrom sent an email alert to students, parents and staff on Friday regarding rumors that someone might try to cause an incident at Tokay, possibly during graduation, and that someone may have brought a weapon to the school.

Although he could not be reached for further comments, Sandstrom said in the email that Tokay High administrators and the Lodi Police Department investigated the rumors and were unable to substantiate them. Lt. Sierra Brucia confirmed that the rumors began two years ago, and were found to be false at that time, as well.

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Rock Evans, center left, stands with father Rueben, far left, mother Melissa, center right, and sister Hadlee Evans, 14, in their Lockeford home on Friday.

Lodi community rallies to help athlete diagnosed with cancer

By John Bays
NEWS-SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

The local youth sports community is rallying to help a Lockeford teen and his family following a cancer diagnosis.

After approximately one month of painful back spasms, Rock "Rocky" Evans, 13, of Lockeford was taken to a South Sacramento hospital on Jan. 30, according to his father, Rueben Evans.

Radiologists noticed something was different with Rocky's bone density and referred him to a hospital in Roseville, where he was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia, Rueben said.

"Leukemia doesn't have stages like other cancers. It's not like it progresses or gets worse, it's just there," he said.

Rocky returned home after 14 days in the hospital, according to his mother, Melissa. Rocky has re-

ceived four rounds of chemotherapy as of Friday, along with multiple blood tests and a minor surgery to implant a port in his chest for medication to be administered.

"He's doing good, he's really strong. We're just working on managing the pain in his back," Melissa said.

When the Lodi Boosters of Boys and Girls Sports (BOBS) heard of Rocky's diagnosis, current president Bill Machen and former president Rob Shepard immediately began brainstorming ways to help the young man who played on their baseball, basketball and soccer teams, according to Machen.

"Being a part of Lodi BOBS, Rocky played in our organization, as well as his sisters. His whole family was involved, and we wanted to find a way to give back to them in their time of need," Machen said.

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